

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 SAM-01 SY-04 OPR-02 A-01 EB-11

CU-04 AID-20 DRC-01 SWF-02 NIC-01 OC-06 CCO-00 /166 W

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R 180808Z APR 74

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 913

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USINT DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 0235

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IZ

SUBJECT: KURDISH CONFLICT HEATING UP

REF: BAGHDAD 221 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: GOI ATTEMPTING TO MAINTAIN POSTURE OF CALM AND
CONFIDENCE IN FACE OF GROWING EVIDENCE THAT SITUATION IN NORTH
DETERIORATING TO POINT WHERE IT CAN BE REVERSED ONLY BY ARMED
FORCE. NEXT KEY DATE IS APRIL 25, EXPIRY OF 30 DAY PERIOD
DURING WHICH POLICE, SOLDIERS, AND OFFICIALS WHO JOINED
BARZANI MAY RETURN TO JOBS WITHOUT SANCTIONS. SINCE LAUNCH-
ING OF FULL SCALE OFFENSIVE WOULD REPRESENT FAILURE OF POLICY
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OF PAST 4 YEARS, IT SEEMS MORE LIKELY THT REGIME WILL

APPLY MILITARY FORCE IN SELECTED AREAS AND AT SAME TIME
PROCEED WITH AUTONOMY PLANS WITH AMENABLE KURDISH ELEMENTS
HOWEVER UNREPRESENTATIVE THEY MAY BE. ACCUSATIONS AGAINST
IRAN AND U.S. LIKELY TO BECOME MORE STRIDENT AS SITUATION
DETERIORATES. END SUMMARY.

2. GOI MAINTAINING OFFICIAL SILENCE ON EVENTS TRANSPIRING
IN IRAQI KURDISTAN AND ATTEMPTING TO CONVEY IMPRESSION
OF BUSINESS AS USUAL. RCC VICE CHAIRMAN SADDAM HISSEIN
CHAIRMAN MEETING OF HIGHER COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL FRONT APRIL
16 WHICH DISCUSSED MEANS OF SPEEDING UP FORMATION OF
EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS FOR AUTONOMOUS KURDISTAN.
OFFICIAL ATTACKS AGAINST IRANI AND "IMPERIALIST" INTRIGUES
ARE INCREASING BUT FEW SPECIFIC ACCUSATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE.
DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S DENIAL THAT USG ARMING KURDS (STATE
72724) NOT PUBLISHED HERE. OFFICIAL PRESS HAS BEGUN
ATTACKING BARZANI DIRECTLY. ON APRIL 18 AL-JUMHURRIYA
HEADLINED BARZANI'S ALLEGED STATEMENT IN PARIS HERALD TRIBUNE
OF APRIL 2 THAT HE WILLING TO RECEIVE ARMS FROM ISRAEL.

3. REPORTS OF WHAT MAY BE GOING ON IN NORTH COMING FROM
"VOICE OF KURDISTAN" AND FEW FOREIGNERS LEFT IN AREA.
TURKISH AMBASSADOR CONFIRMS THAT PESH MERGA STILL IN CONTROL
OF ZAKHO FRONTIER CROSSING. THIS IS SITUATION THAT GOI NOT
EXPECTED TO PERMIT TO CONTINUE SINCE IT MEANS GOI NO LONGER
CONTROLS SINGLE FRONTIER CROSSING WITH TURKEY. STRENUOUS
MILITARY ACTION IN ZAKHO AREA SEEMS LIKELY. OTHER MAIN
AREA OF DIFFICULTY IS APPARENTLY SULAIMANIYA WHICH HAS BEEN
DESERTED BY FOREIGN TECHNICIANS, UNIVERSITY FACULTY AND
STUDENTS AND LEFT TO ARMY AND PESH MERGA WHO ENGAGING IN
EVENING SNIPING AT EACH OTHER. SPANISH EMBOFF TOLD ME
THAT 70 SPANISH TECHNICIANS BUILDING SUGAR MILL NEAR SULIA-
MANIYAH (90 PERCENT COMPLETED) HAD BEEN EVACUATED TO SPAIN.
WHEN MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY COMPLAINED AND SAID NOTHING GOING
ON TO WARRANT EVACUATION, SPANISH AMB HAD SAID HE PREPARED
TO BRING THEM BACK WHEN GOI PERMITS HIM TO VISIT SULIAMANIYAH
FOR HIMSELF. BOTH BAGHDAD-SULIAMANIYAH AND KIRKUK-SULIA-
MANIYAH ROADS REPORTEDLY CLOSED FOR ALL BUT MILITARY TRAFFIC.
THERE ARE ALSO WIDESPREAD REPORTS OF SHORTAGES OF FOOD,
GASOLINE, AND OTHER ESSENTIALS IN PRINCIPAL NORTHERN CITIES. LOWRIE
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NNN

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